A LETTER FROM A TROOPER

In *Flanders*, to his Comerade:

SHEWING,

That *Luxemburg* is a Witch, and deals with the Devil.

Honeſt TOM,

I Know thou doſt remember, that while thou waſt amongſt us, Things went but untowardly; and that having mighty Forces, enough one would have thought to have conquer'd the World, we made nothing on't, but were ſtill on the loſing hand: And ſince thy leaving us, Things have gone on after the ſame Rate. We are told a Fellow call'd an *Obſervator* ſhould ſay, That though we have a brave Army, yet we want Conduct. But I would have

 him

him to know, That we have as good Conduct as any is under the Copes of Heaven. What the Devil then is the Matter? Or how come these Things about? I have been often Musing what the Matter should be; and at last I have found it out. In plain English, *Tom*, we have been bewitch'd. This damn'd Rogue *Luxemburg*, this crooked urchinly Rogue, and the Devil together, have bewitch'd us all this while. As for the *Dauphin*, who commanded the *French* last Summer, or at least had the Name of it, I suspect him not: For we all know that the *Dauphin* is no Conjurer. But we have been bewitch'd as sure as I am here; and none but *Luxemburg* could thus bewitch us.

Thou knowest, *Tom*, that at the beginning, we talk'd of nothing less than Marching into *France*, and Carrying the War into *France*. And we had Forces sufficient for that purpose, both then, and many times since; the *French* not daring to fight us. If they had, we should have beaten them to Clouts. By our carrying the War thus forward, we should have lived upon the Enemy; and should have tumbled in Free Quarter, and Contributions, and Plunder. But instead of this, we have kept still in *Flanders*; lying heavy upon it, and plainly devouring it. Nor have we ever had our Foot upon *French* Ground. So that I conclude we have been bewitch'd; and that a Spell hath been laid before us, which we had not the Power to pass over.

I meant, by *French* Ground, not only their own Country of *France*, but their Conquests also; or generally, the *French* Quarters. And I say again, That we have not been in the *French* Quarters ever since this War; that is, not with our main Army. For I confess Duke *Wirtenburg* with a Detachment, and Count *Thian* with a Party, have been in those Quarters; though their Stay and their Reign were very short. Marry your *Gazette* did publish, That our main Army (upon our late March to *Rousselaer*, where we encamp'd so long to so little purpose) was in the Enemies Country. But that's a damn'd Lye. For the Enemies Country (we all know) is that which is beyond, and within their Frontier Garisons: Whereas this Place is on this side their Frontier, and between their Frontier and ours; and pays Contribution to us, as well as to them. So, I remember, three Years ago, when our Army had passed the *Sambre*, and was got as far as *Beaumont*,

Fools

Fools gave out that we were in the Enemies Quarters. But we were but Nine or Ten Miles from *Charleroy*, which was then Ours, and within the Contribution of that Garison. And the like may be said of *Walcourt*, where we had been before that time.

Thou seest now, that we can come near the Enemies Country; though even That doth seldom happen: But we can't get into it, for the Heart-blood of us. Though we desire it above all Things; and though we want neither Strength, nor Courage, nor Conduct. And therefore thou may'st be satisfied, as well as I, That the Devil has hinder'd us, and that we have been bewitch'd.

The *French* run every foot into Our Country, and why should not We do the like into Theirs? Are we affraid of an Action of Tresspass? We had once *Namur*, *Charleroy*, and *Mons*, all abreast; and it was a noble Frontier. But the *French* made nothing to pass through this Frontier, and to lie in the heart of our Country, between those Places and *Brussels*; where they were as safe as a Thief in a Mill. Not a Quarter ever beaten up, or so much as attempted. And this they would do, even when they were forced to avoid fighting, our Army being stronger than theirs. *Tom*, we have been invaded Year after Year, by an Enemy that durst not fight us: But whether this could be done without Witchcraft, I leave Thee to judge. And I know thou art a great Judg in these Matters: We have many great Officers, that cannot judge half so well.

Prethee *Tom* give me leave, for otherwise I must take it, to add one Word more. I say then, That by these Doings poor *Flanders* hath been sadly burden'd, being made the perpetual Seat of War: When in the mean time the *French* Quarters lie fresh and untoucht. And this hath made them so Rampant as they are. But if we had lain upon their Country as long as they have done upon ours, they would have been in a very bare and low Condition.

Ay but, thou'lt say, We cannot fall into the *French* Quarters, because of their Lines. Very good. And these Lines shew yet more plainly, That there is Witchcraft in the Case: For they could never be defended without the help of the Devil. They reach from *Dunkirk* upon the Sea, to *Pont Espiers* upon the River *Scheld*; which

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is near Forty Engliſh Miles. From whence to *Conde* (along that River, which here ſerves for a Line) is near Twenty Miles more. And from *Conde* to *Namur*, it is almoſt Fifty Miles. Now I leave thee to conſider, whether Lines of this length could be defended without Witchery. And herein lies the Witchery, That we have not the Power to attempt them. For when we did attempt them, (which we have done but twice, and that was under *Wirtemberg* and *Thian*,) we broak through them with Eaſe.

Thou ſeeſt, by what I have written, That I am very fond of getting into the Enemies Country. Others are rather for beſieging and taking their Frontier Towns. And ſo am I, when we are able to do it. But this requires a great Odds in Power: One Army for the Sieges, and another to confront the Enemy. Whereas we may march into their Country, when ever we dare fight. What, go beyond their Frontier Gariſons? Ay, beyond them. Why ſhould not We do it as well as the *French*? And Gariſons ſignify nothing againſt a Commanding Army; no more than ſo many Crows Neſts. An Army that dares Fight, and yet dares not March into the Enemies Country, are the verieſt Buzzards and Owls that ever were hatch'd. Unleſs they are bewitch'd, as We plainly have been. For I would have thee, and all Men to know, and thou doſt know, that We are neither Owls nor Buzzards.

I will now tell thee in particular of ſome of *Luxemburg*'s Tricks: That thou may'ſt ſee what a Rogue he is, and that he is the Rogue that has bewitch'd us. One of his firſt Pranks, after he came in play, was at *Fleury*: where I ſaw plainly, who he dealt with. He lay with his Army beyond the *Sambre*; and Prince *Waldeck* was advancing towards him in fair Order. What does *Luxemburg* now, but get *Boufflers* to him (by the help of the Devil) with his Army from a far Country: And Prince *Waldeck* knew no more on't than the Pope of *Rome*. In the twinkling of an Eye, abundance of Bridges were thrown over the River, by the ſame help I warrant: And they catch'd poor *Waldeck* in *Fleury* Plains, juſt as the Devil had contriv'd it. Would'ſt know what came on't? They gave us a damnable Ruffle, to ſay no worſe.

I come now to *Mons*; which Place we had never loſt by a Winter Siege, but that we were bewitch'd there twice over. Firſt, the Devil

Devil was in it, that when we saw vast Preparations for a Siege, and that in all likelihood *Mons* was aim'd at; we did not put into it one Man the more, though Thousands lay Quartered in *Flanders*. So that the Place was lost for want of Men. For the Garison was not Five thousand strong, when the Place required Ten thousand. Secondly, the Town being yet in Condition to hold out several Days, by *Luxemburg*'s means the Devil possessed the Priests, and set them in a Mutiny; and they forced the Governour to surrender. When at the same time we were just Marching to their Relief.

Mons being lost, we fell to fortifying of *Hall*; which thou knowest is within Seven Miles of *Brussels*. And we had laboured several Weeks upon it. But *Luxemburg* coming across the Country, we were fain to out-run our new Fortress. For, as the Devil would have it, there were but Two thousand Men in it, and no Cannon. We thought the Loss not so great, as the Disgrace and the Baffle.

If *Luxemburg* could have kept this Town, it had been a sharp Thorn in our Sides, lying so near *Brussels*. But our Army grew soon so strong, that he durst not do it. And now he declined Fighting, and mainly fortified his Camp. Whereupon we fairly left him, and marched away directly for *France*; to the great Joy of the whole Army, who long'd to be there. And *Luxemburg* soon followed; Marching along beside us, and Coasting us at a distance. We, in our March, were joyn'd by several Thousands; so that our Army was increased to Ninety thousand Men, the *French* being not near so many. And now we were full of Hopes, and Resolution, and Courage; and we hugg'd our selves with the Thoughts of a brave Invasion. But in the Nick, this cursed Rogue *Luxemburg*, fell to his Charms and Spells, and confounded all. Methinks I see the Devil sitting upon his Crump Shoulder, and beckning to us, and saying; *Come this way, come this way, turn your Noses this way.* And as sure as thou art alive, *Tom*, we stop'd our March into *France*, and turned our Noses upon *Luxemburg*. And we Encamp'd by him with our mighty Army a good part of the Summer; doing no kind of Thing but eat up our own Country. Didst thou not read News in the *Gazette*, Week after Week, *From his Majesties Camp at* Gemblours, *and from the Royal Camp at* Gemblours? There it was that we Lay, just behind *Charleroy* and *Namur*, which then were

ours; while the *French* Army lay advanced before *Mons*. They ſaid, we ſtaid for our heavy Cannon to come by Water from *Maſtricht*; which were long a coming. For the Devil dryed up the *Maeſe* River, and laid Sands in our way, ſo that the Boats could not paſs; and we were bewitch'd all over. At laſt our Cannon came up, and we did nothing with them. However we afterwards marched on, and paſſed the *Sambre*. But we never got Ten Miles beyond it, nor out of our own Contributions: Nor could we ever reach the *French* Quarters; though they lay as open to us, as *Hartfordſhire* does to *Middleſex*. For then they had no Lines thereabouts. But our ſtay was not long in theſe Parts: For within a while we Marched back into *Flanders*, and *Luxemburg* after us; where we paſſed the reſt of the Campaigne.

All this while our Noble King was with us; who is the braveſt General in Chriſtendom. He ſpares for no Pains, and he wants no Brains, and he is Metal to the Back. *Tom*, it would do thee good to ſerve under ſuch a General. But, at the end of the Year, his Majeſty left us, and Prince *Waldeck* commanded. And then it was that *Luxemburg* play'd us another Trick, near a Town called *Leuze*, in a damn'd thick Fogg, which the Devil had raiſed for him; he was with us, and upon us, before we were in the leaſt aware of him. I tell thee, *Tom*, we dreamed not on him, till he was almoſt within Piſtol ſhot. And if we had not fought like Devils, *Luxemburg*'s Devil had beaten us to pieces. But fighting as we did, it proved but a Bruſh, or a Baſting. Here the Devil did as much for *Luxemburg*, as could be expected at his hands. For he raiſed one Miſt in the Air, and caſt another over Some-body's Brains: Or elſe we ſhould have had our Scouts abroad, knowing that the Enemy was not far from us.

The Siege of *Namur* follows next in Order: Where we were bewitch'd moſt confoundedly. It was a brave Town, and of mighty Importance; and we brought a brave Army to relieve it; and our Men were in high Courage, and would have fought Blood up to the Ears, and were mad to be at it; making no queſtion but to beat the *French* to dirt. Then, as to Conduct, I ſay it again, We have as good as any in the World: But yet we ſuffered this Town to be taken before our Faces, without ſtriking a Stroke; or ſo much as firing a Muſquet. And ſome think, That we loſt more Men

Men by lying ſtill, and by the Diſeaſes it occaſioned, than we ſhould have done if we had fought every Day. Now can any Man imagine that theſe Things could be, if the Devil had not bewitch'd us? If the Relief was poſſible, why did we not attempt it? If it was impoſſible, why did we not march away, and make a Diverſion? But We could neither Fall on, nor March off; but were perfectly inchanted. And who ſhould do it, but that crooked *Urchin*, whom I have ſo often mentioned? The *French* King was here himſelf; who is likewiſe much ſuſpected to deal in the Black Art. But, for my part, I am fully ſatisfied, That 'twas *Luxemburg*, and his Devils, that brought theſe Things about. It muſt be confeſſed, that the *French* did ſomething out-number us; but we feared them not. And their Army lay round a great City; their inner Line being without Cannon ſhot, as it muſt be: So that their Quarters extended very wide, and took up a mighty Compaſs. Nor had they any Circumvallation, as they called it; only their Quarters were barricadoed, and ſome Works thrown up here and there. Alſo the *Maes* and the *Sambre* meeting at *Namur*, thoſe two Rivers run through and divided their Quarters. So that part of their Men lay on one ſide the *Sambre*, and part on the other, and part lay beyond the *Maes*. And we having *Huy* upon the *Maes*, and *Charleroy* upon the *Sambre*, we might have marched upon them on either ſide of either River. And it had been hard, if ſomewhere or other we could not beat them up. However we might have tryed what we could do; but the Devil was in it, we never made a tryal. Whereas though we had failed in the Attempt, and been ſoundly banged with the Loſs of Ten or Twenty thouſand Men; no Body would have blamed us, and our very Loſs had been Glorious. But to be Lookers on, was ſuch a Thing; it makes me mad to think on it. Though an *Obſervator* ſays; That we got more Honour by our mighty Attempts to relieve the Town, than the *French* did by taking it.

But after *Namur* was loſt, we fell to fighting like mad; though it would have been better, one would have thought, to have done ſo before. Had we ventured half ſo freely before, as we did after, *Namur* might have been Ours at this day. But as to the Fight we had after, (it is called the Battel of *Steenkirk*, and thou haſt heard much of it) I'll tell thee how it was. The *French* King, after he had taken *Namur*, was gone to *Paris*; and a good part of his Army

was

was ſent towards *Germany*; and our Army was much increaſed. So that the *French* Army, left in *Flanders* with *Luxemburg*, was now clearly the weaker. Yet, for all that, he had the Impudence to march into our Country, and there continue. But, for fear of the worſt, he encamped in a Ground of great Advantage, which he alſo ſtrongly fortified. Whereupon we took a Reſolution to fall upon him in his Camp. And we begun moſt bravely. Ten Battalions of Ours, who had the Van, beat Thirty *French* Battalions out of their Ground; and chaſed them from Hedg to Hedg, and from one Work to another; and we made them out-run their Cannon. We ſhewed what Rogues we could make of the *French*, if we had them fairly before us. And now was *Luxemburg* hard put to it: He ſcarce had time to ſay a ſhort Prayer to the Devil. *Good Devil*, quoth he, *help me out at this dead Lift, or I am undone for ever*. And the Devil did help him to ſome purpoſe. For he ſo brought it about, that our Men were not ſeconded: By which means we were beaten off with great Loſs, (ſtill Fighting ſtoutly) and *Luxemburg* ſcaped a Scouring. For had our main Body ſeconded our Van, he had certainly been quite Routed. Some ſaid, That our main Body could not come up, becauſe of the bad Ground. But why could they not march the ſame Way, and upon the ſame Ground, that the Van had done? And why did they not follow cloſer, but lay Lagging ſome Miles behind? In ſhort, The Devil was in it, and we were bewitch'd.

When this bloody Bout was over; and our Army recruited and reinforced, we marched to attaque the *French* Lines. But *Luxemburg*, by the help of his old Friend the Devil, got thither before us. For we, on our part, ſaunter'd a great way about, and out of our way, as if *Puck* had led us; which I believe he did. However, we then learned, as we had done at *Hall* before, That the true way to draw the *French* out of *Flanders*, is to march into *France*, or towards it. For they are very tender in this matter: And though they love to be in an Enemies Country, yet they cannot endure that an Enemy ſhould be in theirs.

Being bob'd at the Lines, we went with our Commanding Army and encampt at at a Place called *Grammen*; which is a good ſnug Place, within our own Country, and but Five or Six Miles from *Gaunt*. And here we were tyed by the Leg (no doubt by Sorcery and

and Witchcraft, it could be nothing elſe) for a great many Weeks; being not able to move one way or other. But our Army increaſed to a Hundred thouſand Men, while *Luxemburg* had not half the Number; a great part of his Army being gon to the *Maes* under *Boufflers*, to ſtave off an Invaſion there. Nevertheleſs we ſtill kept cloſe in our Camp at *Grammen*: Nor did we budg from it till we went into Winter Quarters. During all which time you had News in the *Gazette*, *From the Royal Camp at* Grammen.

But what could we have done, had we been diſpoſed to be active? I anſwer, That in the firſt Place we might ſtill have attempted their Lines. Not their Line between the *Scheld* and the *Lys*, where *Luxemburg* lay with his Army; but their long Line between the *Lys* and *Dunkirk*. For this had but an ordinary Guard: And if the *French* ſhould have drawn their main Army to have defended it, their new and unfiniſhed Fortifications at *Courtray*, and likewiſe their Camp near it, would have been in great danger. We found afterward, by Experience, that in all likelihood it would have been no hard Matter to have forced theſe Lines. But if it had prov'd hard, and we had been repulſed, we might have marched up the *Scheld*; and have endeavoured, by throwing Bridges over it, to have gotten that way into the *French* Conqueſts. *Tom*, I think in my Conſcience this River *Scheld* is enchanted. It is like *Styx*, the River of Hell; which none could paſs without the help of old *Charon*. Thou knoweſt it is but a paltry River, in compariſon of other Rivers. A Man (I had almoſt ſaid) may leap over it with a Pike Staff: I am ſure that with Five or Six Boats, we might lay a Bridge over it any where. And yet we ſtand in as much awe of it, as if it were the *Rhine*, or the *Danube*; we dare not ſo much as attempt to paſs it. Though the *French* Conqueſts lie entire and untoucht behind it; at which we might have our Wills, if we durſt paſs this River. If we muſt Encamp, why might we not have Encampt upon this River (getting likewiſe a Paſſage over it) any where above their Lines? And then the *French* muſt quit their Lines, we being behind them. Or if we had made a new Gariſon, methinks there were the Place. A luſty Gariſon here, (I would not have it leſs than Ten thouſand Men) would maintain it ſelf bravely, by Contributions out of the *French* Conqueſts. In ſuch a Gariſon I ſhould deſire to be; there

were ſome Cut in ſuch a Gariſon. But ſuppoſe we could not get over this River; muſt we then lie in our own Country with our Commanding Army? There was no ſuch Neceſſity. For we might have gone higher up the *Scheld*; and have forced thoſe Lines, (if they had then any Lines there) which afterwards Count *Thian* forced ſo eaſily, with a Party of Twelve hundred Men. Which being done, nothing could have hinder'd us from Marching into *France*, we having ſuch a mighty Power as we had. And if *Luxemburg* had come in our way, we ſhould have beaten him, with all his Devils. But let us go on.

Thou haſt heard, I know, That *Dixmude* and *Furnes*, which we had fortified at the end of the Campagne, were moſt famouſly loſt this Winter. We out-run the one, and the other was delivered up after a Siege of ſome Hours. When theſe Things were done, *Luxemburg* was at *Paris*: But I warrant he had laid his Spells before he went; for I am very ſure he did bewitch us. Was it not a bewitched Thing, that we ſhould fortify theſe Places for the *French*? When baſe Things are done, and no body in Fault, I conclude there is Witchcraft in the Caſe: And when no body is Puniſh'd, I conclude that no body was in Fault. We were much troubled at the Loſs of theſe Places: But ſome think, That we were more bewitch'd in Fortifying them, than we were in Loſing them. *Furnes* is about Five Miles forward from *Newport*, (which is Ours;) and *Dixmude* about Seven ſideward. And muſt we have a Gariſon at every Seven Miles end? Why, a ſmall Country, thus Gariſon'd, would drink up a great Army. And thou knoweſt, *Tom*, (for thou art a cunning Dog, and haſt Guts i'thy Brains,) that when we fortify Places near our own Gariſons, they do us little good if we keep them, and great Miſchief if the Enemy take them. If we had kept theſe Two Places, they would not have commanded a Contribution (more than we had before) to maintain a Thouſand Men; when at leaſt Five or Six thouſand muſt be in them. I'll not give a Pin for a Gariſon, that has not a good Contribution. For the great End of Gariſons, let them ſay what they will, is to command Contributions. Therefore our new Gariſons ſhould have been made Twenty or Thirty Miles forward, towards the Enemies Country; and then they would have Contribution in abundance.

Now

Now follows the Campagne of 93. in the Beginning of which the *French* Monarch was ſoundly baffled. At that Seaſon, it ſeems, the Devil was turn'd againſt him, or at leaſt forſook him. He came upon us with a greater Force than ever; and we were to be run down forthwith, and all *Flanders* to be ſwallowed up. In good earneſt, *Tom*, we were in great danger. But our King Encamp'd ſo commodiouſly, and ſo ſtrongly, and took ſuch Order for the Defence of all Places, that the Monarch was quite gravell'd. Yet if he had not been an arrant Buzzard, or the Devil had not owed him a Shame, he might have left us in our Camp, and have marched up to *Bruſſels*, and beyond it, and whither he pleas'd; and have grazed up the Country as he went, and have put all *Brabant* under Contribution. Which had put us in a bad Condition to maintain the War: And ſome Places or other would have fallen into his hands. But inſtead of doing this, or any Thing elſe, he ſneak'd back to *Paris*, (or to *Verſailles*, I care not which) and all his Court Ladies with him: Whom he had brought to be Spectators of his famous Victories; and by Report they were no better than they ſhould be. Soon after the *Dauphin* marched towards *Germany*, with part of the *French* Army: *Luxemburg* being left with the remaining Part, which was ſtill a Force ſuperiour to Ours. And not long after that, the Duke of *Wirtemberg* was detach'd from our Army to attaque the *French* Lines. Which Deſign was carried ſo ſecretly, that the Devil himſelf could not diſcover it to *Luxemburg*. The Lines were maſter'd with little ado, and we got into brave Quarters, and we raiſed Contributions amain. But then came the Battel of *Landen*, (another bloody Bout,) which hurried us back to our main Army that wanted us. 'Till then we had been free from Witchcraft during that Campaigne: But then *Luxemburg* beſtir'd himſelf, and conjur'd up all his Devils; and we were bewitch'd over and over. Firſt, The Devil bewitch'd us to let *Huy* be ſo miſerably unprovided for defence, the Enemy being ſo near it. And if we could not defend it, why did we not blow it up? But it was yielded in two or three Days. Secondly, We were bewitch'd to lie in the Enemies reach, who ſo much overpower'd us. And thirdly, We were catch'd in a bewitched Ground; having a River and Moraſs behind us, which ſhould have been before us. The *French* came up with us over Night; and we expected to Retreat that Night, which the Gallants thought diſhonourable. But ſome of our Troop have read Sir *Walter Rawleigh's*

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and they tell us that he has a Saying, *That 'tis more honourable to Retreat by Night, than to be Beaten by Day.* But we fought it ſtoutly; and the King did bravely above the reſt. However it was a bad Buſineſs: And it would have been much worſe, if *Luxemburg* (to our great good Fortune) had not play'd the Beaſt, in not purſuing his Advantage.

We are come at laſt to *Ninety four*, or the Campaigne of laſt Summer: And thou wilt find by the Story, That the Devil doth ſtill haunt us, and bewitch us. This Year the *Dauphin* did again Command the *French* in Chief; and the old Magician (thou knoweſt who I mean) Commanded again under him. And they preſently fell to their old Trade: For the firſt Thing they did, was to come boring into our Country, where they lay at Rack and Manger. And we ſuffered this as tamely as we uſed to do: Wherein thou may'ſt perceive a Spice of the old Witchery. I confeſs that the *French* at firſt were ſomething too ſtrong for us: But in a ſhort time we were grown ſtronger than they; and our Fingers itched to be upon their Jackets. However we were content to forbear, till the Arrival of all our Forces: Which Forces being come, and we being all together, the Sun never ſhined upon a braver Army. And then we out-number'd the Enemy, by many Thouſands, both in Horſe and Foot; and we had better Horſes, and better Men, and were every way ſuperiour: So that we made no more of the *French* Army, than of ſo many Jack-daws. We being in this glorious Condition, the *French*, who had lain beſide us, then marched in quite beyond us; and were got between *Liege* and *Maſtricht*. But we thought them beſotted, to give us ſuch an Advantage; making account that we had them then in a Bag (if we had but the Grace to ſhut it,) and that they could not eſcape us. For our Army interpoſing between them and home, (as we expected we ſhould) and they having with them all their Baggage and heavy Cannon, they could not get off without fighting; and then we made no doubt but we ſhould beat them to fitters. For my part, I thought the War was near an End; a happy and glorious End: There being but two Things to do; that is, to beat the *French* Army, and then to march to *Paris*. Thou knoweſt, *Tom*, That *Namur*, and *Huy*, and *Liege*, and *Maſtricht*, lie all on a Row upon the *Maeſe*. Of which *Maſtricht* and *Liege* were ours, and the *French* had *Huy* and *Namur*: *Huy* being advanced into our Quarters,

Quarters, beyond all the reſt of their Frontier. Theſe Places lying thus, and the *French* Army (as I told thee) being between *Liege* and *Maſtricht*, we had Orders given us to get ready to March. And I cannot expreſs, nor thou imagine, how joyfully we received theſe Orders. And then our Buſineſs was, either to march ſtraight upon the Enemy, or to cut off their Retreat, by interpoſing between them and home; that is, between them and *Huy*: For if they got to *Huy*, they got home. But now ſee and wonder how we were Enchanted: *Tom*, as I hope to be ſaved, we turn'd our Noſes the wrong way again. For with mighty diligence we marched clear fromward the Enemy, and likewiſe beſide and beyond *Huy*; leaving the *French* a free Paſſage to it. And they marched thither the very next day. Never talk now of Bungling, or Fumbling, or making Blunders; for we ſcorn thoſe Words. 'Twas Witchcraft, dear *Tom*, 'twas Witchcraft, that made us do as we did; the Devil and *Luxemburg* did bewitch us: And that damn'd Magician may brag of this, as one of his braveſt Feats. Thou wilt ſay, That we were ſtill between the *French* and *Namur*. Ay, and ſo we were. But the *French* had a Bridge at *Huy* over the River, and they made divers other Bridges: Whereas we had none, nor did we offer to make any. So that they could march to *Namur* on the far ſide the River, when they pleas'd, without the leaſt danger or diſturbance. But they choſe rather to lie by it, that they might give us a Baffle by making us riſe firſt: Wherein they ſucceeded, as well they might. For they Commanded the one ſide of the River as much as we; and the other ſide they had wholy to themſelves.

Yet here we ſtaid and encamp'd, as long as we could get any Forage, waiting upon the French-mens Back ſides; (when thou and I are together, we uſe another Word.) But, for my part, I did not think we had owed them that Duty; nor did I know why, or wherefore we ſtaid here ſo long, in the high Condition we were in. The *French*, being the weaker, might with reaſon be willing that the time ſhould be ſpent in idle Encampments: But we, who were the ſtronger, if we had not been ſtill bewitch'd, methinks ſhould rather have choſen to be doing. Well, at laſt we marched away for *Flanders*, as hard as we could drive, to have another bout at thoſe Lines. And the *French* durſt not follow us the way we went, (which was the next way,) for fear we ſhould turn back

upon them, and fall upon their Bones; but they were fain to go round by *Namur*, and beyond the *Sambre*. Yet, by the Devil's help, (for no power of Man could do it) they got before us to the Lines: By which means we were prevented and baffled.

What had we then to do, with our glorious Army, but to march presently up the *Scheld*; and either force a Passage over that River, or march on directly for *France* it self? We had then led the *French* such a Dance, who were damnably jaded by their late long March, and hardly able to crawl,) that all the Devils in Hell could not have enabled them to follow us. But the Devil turn'd our Noses once more the wrong way: For we marched down the River, and into our own Country; first to *Oudenard*, then almost to *Gaunt*, and at last to a Place called *Rousselaer*, which now bears the Name of a Royal Camp. For here was another Encampment, and Enchantment: And here we lay with our glorious Army all the rest of the Summer, as it were bound Hand and Foot; and without doing any Thing, or any prospect of it. For we were coop'd up by the Enemies Lines, which we had no Thoughts of Attempting. And was not this a bewitched Place, for such an Army to lie in? We exceeded the Enemy by Thirty or Forty thousand: And though after a while we sent a Detachment to the Siege of *Huy*, yet still we far exceeded them. If we had Encamp'd all this while in the Enemies Country, it would never have anger'd me, though we had been never so idle: For then, if we had done nothing else, we had eaten up the Enemies Country. I have told thee already, and I tell thee again, that we were not then in the Enemies Country. In the Country between both, I confess, we were: But in these parts, the Enemies Country is that within their Lines; whereas our Camp was without these Lines, and Eight or Nine Miles short of them.

I said before, that we had never attempted *Scheld* River, but I lyed; we attempted it then, that is, we look'd upon it and no more. First, one great Man view'd the Place, and then another great Man view'd it, and then we came away. It was as we came down to *Oudenard*, in our way to our Camp: And the Attempt was made by a Detachment of about Six thousand Men. But if we had been in earnest, we might have made, out of our vast Numbers, many such Detachments for that Service: And we might have

have attempted ſeveral Places at once; or tryed one Place, and then another; both by Day and by Night. How did Prince *Lewis* of *Baden* paſs the *Rhine* this Summer? I am ſure I ſaw it in the *Paris Gazette*, (for *Tom* I can now read *French* a little,) That he made a falſe Attaque or Attempt in one Place, and then paſſed in another; the *French* having drawn their Forces to the firſt Place. But this Attempt of ours (ſuch as it was) was made in one Place only; and in a Place more likely to be provided for defence, than any other on the River. For it was at *Pont Eſperies*, where the *French* Line ends, which is between the *Lys* and the *Scheld*, and where they always had Forts and Guards.

Our retaking of *Huy* was a very good Buſineſs, as Things go: But I expected that the Army that took it, would have enter'd the Dutchy of *Lutzenburg*, which the *French* now have, and which lies hard by; and ſo have broken that Charm that keeps us hitherto from Entring the Enemies Country. Thou wilt ſay, They did enter that Dutchy, for all the News-books ſaid ſo. Why then all the News-books lyed; for we never were in that Dutchy, nor out of the Dioceſe of *Liege*: For, by their own Story, we lay all the while between *Navaigne* and *Franchimont*, both which Places are in this Dioceſe. And *Navaigne* is upon the *Maes*, almoſt as low as *Maſtricht*. And therefore I am the more confirmed that ſome Witchcraft lies upon us; ſo that we cannot find the way into the Enemies Country.

In the cloſe of the laſt Campaigne (for at laſt I draw to a Concluſion) we new fortified ſeveral Places: That is, *Dixmude* again, (which the *French* had ſlighted and abandon'd,) *Deynſe*, *Ninove*, and *Tillemont*; and we talk of *Hall* likewiſe. Of theſe, *Dixmude* (as I ſaid before) is Seven Miles from *Newport*; *Deynſe* is within Five Miles of *Gaunt*; *Ninove* lies behind *Oudenard* and *Aeth*; *Tillemont* is between *Lovain* and *Leeuwe*, and very near the later; and *Hall* is within Six or Seven Miles of *Bruſſels*. And the Places to which they lie thus near, were our ſtanding Gariſons before. Let us now examine between thee and me, and according to our Rules, (and I think we Troopers ſhould underſtand theſe Matters as well as ſome of them do) whether theſe new Gariſons be good ones, and will do us any Service. I ſay then, That if each of theſe new Gariſons can command Contribution to maintain Three or Four thouſand,

thouſand, or even Two or Three thouſand Men, we muſt allow theſe Gariſons to be good ones. But if all theſe Gariſons put together, will not command any Contribution worth the ſpeaking of, more than we might have without them; then, according to our Rules, all of them together are not worth a Dog-turd. And we were bewitch'd, by *Luxemburg* and the Devil, to be at ſo much Charge, in fortifying and keeping ſuch uſeleſs Things. A little time will ſhew what they can do. But if we had made a new Gariſon upon the *Scheld*, any where between *Tournay* and *Conde*, and another upon the *Sambre* near *Charleroy*, either above or below it; I'd have eaten Hay with a Horſe, and been hang'd for a Fool, if either of theſe two Gariſons would not have maintain'd Ten thouſand Men: If they were made big enough (as they ought) to contain ſo many. And all this by Contributions out of the Enemies Countries, which otherwiſe we cannot reach. Out of theſe two Gariſons we ſhould have ſcour'd the *French* Quarters i'faith.

I could write more now to thee, but I won't; for I know thou art a Man of Buſineſs. Only I ſhall ſay This, That if this curſed Witchcraft which has ſo plagu'd us were removed, we'd beat the *French* to *Jericho*: But if it continue upon us, though you ſend us never ſo many Millions from *England*, we ſhall do nothing here in *Flanders* that is worth one Farthing. And ſo, dear *Tom*, fare thee well.

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